



*The University of Oklahoma*  
*Health Sciences Center*  
*Microbiology & Immunology*

**FTR**

January 26, 2015

RE: Connecticut General Assembly  
Insurance & Real Estate Committee Public Hearing  
Testimony in Support of SB 15, AAC Health Insurance Coverage for  
Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated with Streptococcal Infections.

To: Senator Crisco, Representative Megna and members of the Insurance & Real Estate Committee.

From: **Madeleine W. Cunningham, Ph.D.**  
George Lynn Cross Research Professor  
Presbyterian Health Fdn Presidential Professor  
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center  
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I have been investigating the immunology of PANDAS for the past 15+ years and have directed research studies of anti-neuronal autoantibodies from the blood of patients with PANDAS. I have investigated autoantibodies in PANDAS and discovered that children with PANDAS have a variety of autoantibodies against neurons in their brain. I developed a group of assays called the Cunningham Panel which is offered today through a commercial entity, Moleculera Labs in Oklahoma City. I have spoken with families over the years and heard about the suffering of their children with PANDAS from approximately 1000 parents and children who were enrolled in my studies. I am writing to strongly support SB 15 to help families who are already overextended financially and need insurance companies to provide assistance, recognize PANDAS as a disease, and provide insured health care for their children with PANDAS. The insurance companies and the government of the state need to step up and offer assistance to these families. Not only do families have to struggle to get their child diagnosed and treated, but they have to struggle financially to cover medical costs for the PANDAS child and then even worse they have to struggle to get their child educated in a complex situation. I know that the legislature of Connecticut will be responsible and do what is necessary for families battling PANDAS disease.

Yours truly,

*Madeleine W. Cunningham*

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